



Office of the City Manager
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MEMORANDUM

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To: Common Council
From: John Weidl, City Manager
Date: 3/5/2024
Re: Addendum: City Manager Performance Improvement Plan and Reflections on Evaluations

Supplement to the City Manager Performance Improvement Plan

This supplement addresses the specific directives provided by the Common Council, integrating them with the existing Performance Improvement Plan to ensure a cohesive approach to enhancing effectiveness and communication in my role as City Manager.

Enhanced Communication and Transparency

- **Work Schedule Updates:** Integrate work schedule and remote work day updates into the monthly one-on-one check-ins with Council members to enhance transparency.
- **Significant Project Updates:** Utilize the established semiannual feedback sessions to provide detailed updates on significant projects, including the Aquatic Center, ensuring a balance between confidentiality and Council awareness.

Thoughtful and Civil Communication

- **Reflective Communication Period:** Implement a 48-hour reflection period for outgoing communications, building upon mindfulness exercises to ensure thoughtful and considered responses.
- **Civility in Responses:** Incorporate feedback mechanisms in quarterly reflections with a mentor to assess and improve civility in responses to public and Council inquiries, aligning with the goal of maintaining professionalism and composure.

Press Releases and Public Image

Positive Tone in Press Releases: Review and adjust the tone of press releases to align with strategic goals, as part of the comprehensive improvement in community engagement and public representation.

Confidentiality and Policy Adherence

- **Confidentiality Measures:** Strengthen confidentiality protocols around sensitive discussions and information, leveraging training from CVMIC to enhance understanding and adherence to confidentiality requirements.
- **Policy and Municipal Code Expertise:** Schedule internal training sessions focused on the City Municipal Code and transparency ordinance, leveraging existing knowledge enhancement goals related to local government management.

Budget and Strategic Alignment

- **Budget Goals Alignment:** Integrate targeted completion rates for budget goals (75-80%) into the existing framework for enhancing teamwork and internal relationships, ensuring these goals are clearly communicated and aligned with the strategic plan.

This supplement builds upon the foundations laid in the initial Performance Improvement Plan, ensuring a comprehensive approach to addressing the Council's feedback without necessitating a completely new plan. Regular updates and reflections on progress will be shared with the Common Council to ensure ongoing alignment and responsiveness to their directives and expectations.

ORIGINAL MEMORANDUM

To: Common Council
From: John Weidl, City Manager
Date: 1/12/2024
Re: Addendum: City Manager Performance Improvement Plan and Reflections on Evaluations

Introduction

As City Manager of Whitewater, I have taken a comprehensive look at the feedback provided by both our staff and the Common Council. This reflection has led to the formulation of a plan that not only addresses areas for improvement but also builds upon the strengths and effective practices that have been acknowledged in my current role. This balanced approach, guided by SMART goals, is aimed at enhancing my effectiveness and continuing the positive impacts I have made, all while striving for growth and improvement in my service to the City of Whitewater.

Comprehensive Improvement Plan with SMART Goals

1. Professionalism and Composure

Objective: To enhance the ability to maintain composure and professionalism in confrontational or high-stress situations.

- Goal: Attend emotional intelligence/difficult conversations and conflict resolution training through CVMIC in 2024.
- Measurement: Track incidents where composure is challenged and aim for a 50% reduction in negative feedback related to composure in the next evaluation cycle.
- Action Plan: Enroll and complete specific workshops, practice regular mindfulness exercises, and schedule quarterly reflections and feedback sessions with a mentor.
- Time-Bound: Achieve noticeable improvement by the next evaluation period.

2. Communication and Collaboration with Council Members

Objective: Improve communication and collaboration with Council members for a more effective and cooperative working environment.

- Goal: Establish a routine of monthly one-on-one check-ins with each participating Council members and semiannual feedback sessions with the governing body. Attend conflict resolution and meeting management training through CVMIC by end of April, 2024.
- Measurement: Use feedback from check-in sessions to assess improvements in collaboration, aiming for positive remarks in 75% of feedback by the next evaluation.
- Action Plan: Schedule regular check-ins, ask for regular feedback, and initiate semiannual feedback sessions.
- Time-Bound: Implement and evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies within six months.

3. Consistency in Handling Council Requests

Objective: Improve the timeliness and consistency in addressing and handling requests from Council members.

- Goal: Continue to use future-item request tracking system by and achieve a 90% on-time response rate for all council requests by September 2024.
- Measurement: Monitor the tracking system for response times and completion rates.
- Action Plan: Set up the system, establish a process for prioritization and delegation, and provide regular updates on requests.
- Time-Bound: Fully operational system and improved response rates within six months.

4. Enhancing Teamwork and Building Stronger Internal Relationships

Objective: Foster a collaborative and supportive environment within the City administration.

- Goal: Conduct semiannual team-building activities and establish an open communication forum, by June, 2024. Attend interpersonal skills and stress management training through CVMIC by June 2024.
- Measurement: Conduct an employee satisfaction survey every six months with a target of 50% participation to establish a baseline for improvement.
- Action Plan: Organize team-building exercises, informal meetings, and gather regular feedback on leadership style.
- Time-Bound: Ongoing activity with initial results expected in six months.

5. Community Engagement and Public Representation

Objective: Enhance effectiveness in engaging with the community and representing the City positively.

- Goal: Review effective communication training through CVMIC, increase participation in community events by 25% and improve social media engagement metrics by an additional 15% by December 2024.
- Measurement: Track participation in events and analyze social media engagement data.
- Action Plan: Participate in more community events, undertake public speaking training by June 2024, and continue implementing the comprehensive social media strategy.
- Time-Bound: Review progress semiannually with the aim of achieving goals by the end of 2024.

Reflecting on Strengths and Positive Feedback

As City Manager of Whitewater, I value the feedback provided by both the staff and the Common Council. It's encouraging to see areas where my efforts have been recognized positively. Here's a reflection on these strengths, as identified in the evaluations, and my commitment to continue these effective practices:

- Strong Work Ethic and Drive (Common Council Evaluation): The Common Council has noted my strong work ethic and drive. This has been a cornerstone of my approach to managing our City's diverse needs and challenges. I am committed to maintaining this level of dedication, knowing it's crucial for our continued success.
- Knowledge in Local Government Management (Staff Evaluation): Our staff has appreciated my engagement with current developments in local government management. Staying informed and proactive has been beneficial, and I will continue to prioritize this to ensure our City's management is aligned with the best practices.
- Innovation and Creativity (Staff Evaluation): I'm pleased that the staff has recognized my capacity for innovation and creativity in problem-solving. These attributes are vital in our ever-evolving City landscape, and I plan to continue fostering this innovative spirit in our operations.

- Dedication to Community Service (Common Council Evaluation): The Common Council commended my dedication to the community. My active involvement in community events is something I greatly value, and I will persist in being an accessible and engaged City Manager.
- Effective Fiscal Management (Both Evaluations): Both the staff and the Common Council have acknowledged my skills in fiscal management. Balancing our budget and managing our finances effectively are responsibilities I take seriously. I will continue to apply a strategic and prudent approach to our City's fiscal health.
- Recognizing Staff Accomplishments (Staff Evaluation): The positive feedback from our staff regarding the recognition of their achievements reinforces my belief in celebrating our team's successes. I will continue to acknowledge and appreciate the hard work and contributions of our staff, as it is essential for a motivated and cohesive team environment.
- Responsive to Council Members and Citizens (Common Council Evaluation): The Common Council noted my responsiveness to both their inquiries and the needs of our citizens. This aspect of my role is something I pride myself on, and I am dedicated to maintaining this level of attentiveness and engagement.
- Professionalism in Public Office (Staff Evaluation): Our staff has appreciated the professional example I set in the public office. Upholding fairness, integrity, and impartiality are values I hold in high regard, and I am committed to continuing this professional conduct in all aspects of my role.

Scores Discussion

In analyzing the evaluations from our staff and the Common Council, it's important to contextualize the scores in relation to my performance as City Manager. The staff's evaluation, yielding an aggregate score of 4.02 out of 5, reflects positively on the effectiveness of my management style and initiatives. This score, indicative of strong performance, underscores the confidence and satisfaction the staff has in my leadership and our collaborative efforts.

Conversely, the Common Council's evaluation, resulting in a score of 3.70 out of 5, suggests an above-average performance but with identifiable areas for growth. This score, while lower than that of the staff, still demonstrates above-average performance and a general satisfaction with my tenure. It's crucial to note that some Council members have not participated as actively in governance training sessions or engaged in the one-on-one meetings offered. These sessions are critical for building mutual understanding and rapport, which can significantly influence perceptions and working relationships.

The recent commitment from the Council to engage more actively in training and governance protocols is a promising development. As these training sessions and one-on-one meetings become more integrated into our routine, I am confident they will positively impact our collective performance and understanding.

A notable discrepancy appears in the area of supervision, where the Council's score of 3.45 contrasts sharply with the staff's more favorable view. The staff has given high ratings in key supervisory aspects, including encouragement of departmental decision-making (4.50), promotion of initiative in subordinates (4.50), and fostering teamwork and problem-solving (4.25). This suggests a strong internal acknowledgment of my efforts in these areas, which may not be as visible or recognized by the Council.

Addressing this gap in perception is crucial. I plan to enhance communication with the Council, sharing more about our internal management strategies and the positive outcomes they bring, as experienced by our staff. This should help provide a fuller picture of my supervisory approach and its effectiveness. Additionally, I encourage the Council to engage more directly in discussions with me, which can lead to a better alignment of our perspectives.

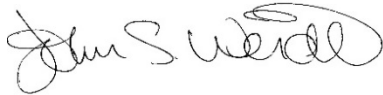
Conclusion

In light of these evaluations, my commitment to fostering a constructive and collaborative relationship with every member of the Common Council remains steadfast. I believe that through our joint efforts in training, communication, and shared governance, we can enhance our working dynamics and effectively serve the City of Whitewater.

The staff's evaluation, highlighting strengths in areas such as knowledge of local government management, innovation and creativity, and recognition of staff accomplishments, is encouraging. These positive scores inspire me to maintain and further develop these aspects of my leadership. As City Manager, I am dedicated to sustaining these effective practices, ensuring that our team continues to serve Whitewater with excellence and dedication.

Moving forward, I view these scores not merely as reflections of past performance, but as indicators of areas where I can continue to excel and grow. The staff's recognition of the positive impact of my strategies and the Council's feedback provide valuable insights into where I can focus for further improvement. I am confident that with continued collaboration, open communication, and a shared commitment to excellence, we will see ongoing progress and success in our City.

Warmest Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John S. Weidl". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "J" and "W".

John S. Weidl, City Manager

Task List / Checklist

1. Professionalism and Composure

- Attend emotional intelligence, difficult conversations, and conflict resolution training through CVMIC in 2024.
- Practice regular mindfulness exercises.
- Schedule quarterly reflections and feedback sessions with a mentor.

2. Communication and Collaboration with Council Members

- Establish a routine of monthly one-on-one check-ins with each participating Council member.
- Attend conflict resolution and meeting management training through CVMIC by the end of April 2024.
- Initiate semiannual feedback sessions with the governing body.

3. Consistency in Handling Council Requests

- Implement future-item request tracking system.
- Achieve a 90% on-time response rate for all council requests by September 2024.
- Regularly update on requests' status.

4. Enhancing Teamwork and Building Stronger Internal Relationships

- Conduct semiannual team-building activities.
- Establish an open communication forum by June 2024.
- Attend interpersonal skills and stress management training through CVMIC by June 2024.

5. Community Engagement and Public Representation

- Review effective communication training through CVMIC.
- Increase participation in community events by 25% by December 2024.
- Improve social media engagement metrics by an additional 15% by December 2024.
- Undertake public speaking training by June 2024.

Basic Timeline / Schedule

- Jan-Apr 2024: Monthly Council check-ins start, attend meeting management training.
- By End of Apr 2024: Complete conflict resolution and meeting management training.
- Jun 2024: Conduct first team-building activity, complete public speaking and interpersonal skills training.
- Jul-Dec 2024: Continue monthly check-ins, second team-building activity, monitor community event participation and social media engagement.
- By Sep 2024: Achieve 90% on-time response rate for Council requests.
- By Dec 2024: Review progress in community engagement and public representation goals.

Key Dates for Setting Reminders

- End of April 2024: Reminder to complete conflict resolution and meeting management training.
- Start of June 2024: Reminder for team-building activity and to complete public speaking and interpersonal skills training.
- Start of September 2024: Check on the progress of Council request response rates.
- End of December 2024* Review overall progress in community engagement and public representation.