SPECIAL MEETING

ATASCADERO CITY COUNCIL
Building Public Trust Workshop

Wednesday, April 2, 2008, 6:00 p.m.
Thursday, April 3, 2008, 8:30 a.m.

DRAFT MINUTES

(This meeting was a workshop, and the minutes reflect the exercises and discussions led by the Facilitator. The public attendees participated with the Council and staff throughout the workshop.)

Wednesday, April 2, 2008

Call to Order – 6:00 p.m. - Mayor Brennler

Mayor Brennler called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Council Members Béraud, Clay, Luna, O’Malley, and Mayor Brennler

Absent: None

Others Present: City Clerk / Assistant to City Manager Marcia McClure Torgerson

Others Present: City Manager Wade McKinney, City Attorney Brian Pierik, Assistant Manager Jim Lewis, and facilitator Dr. Tom Shanks
Welcome and Introductions – Mayor Pro Tem Béraud & Council Member O’Malley

Mayor Pro Tem Béraud and Council Member O’Malley talked briefly about the Public Trust Program that they have been developing and gave a summary of the purpose of this workshop. Mayor Pro Tem Béraud introduced the facilitator, Dr. Tom Shanks.

Building Public Trust Workshop:

Dr. Shanks explained what to expect during the workshop; that this will be a hands-on course for the City Council, Staff, and the audience. He reviewed the ground-rules, participant agreements, and how the public would be involved. Dr. Shanks stated that the City Council needs to air their differences so that they can move on. There were several discussions concerning Council Member differences and possible solutions so the Council can move towards a more positive working environment.

Dr. Shanks led a discussion on the levels of trust for an organization and asked everyone, including the audience, to discuss the level of trust they have for the City of Atascadero.

*Mayor Brennler called a recess at 8:00 p.m.*
*Workshop resumed at 8:10 p.m.*

Dr. Shanks led the Council and staff through an exercise and discussion concerning values. The City Council and staff then discussed individual issues and the public was included.

The Council listed goals they agree on concerning Council behavior:

**Council Goals**
- When the City is attacked from the outside, Council should get current information from staff BEFORE responding. If time allows, Council should respond at a Council meeting. If the issue is significant, a Special Meeting should be called.
- Council to speak with one voice on significant issues.
- Council defend individual members and staff when attacked – correct falsehoods

The City Council and staff were asked what they are taking away from tonight:
- Got a lot off their chests and felt good about it
- Realized they had emotions bottled up inside
- This is a safe environment to discuss conflict issues
- They have hope and are optimistic that these types of workshops will improve their working relationships

*Mayor Brennler continued the workshop at 9:15 p.m., to Thursday, April 3, 2008 at 8:30 a.m.*
Thursday, April 3, 2008

Call to Order – 8:30 a.m. - Mayor Brennler

Mayor Brennler called the workshop to order at 8:45 a.m.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Council Members Béraud, Clay, Luna, O’Malley, and Mayor Brennler

Absent: None

Others Present: City Clerk / Assistant to City Manager Marcia McClure Torgerson

Others Present: City Manager Wade McKinney, Assistant Manager Jim Lewis, and City Attorney Brian Pierik.

Building Public Trust Workshop:

Facilitator Dr. Tom Shanks led the Council and staff through a series of exercises and discussions concerning what they are proud of, what is their personal best, and why there are proud of City staff.

Mayor Brennler called a recess at 10:40 a.m. Workshop resumed at 10:55 a.m.

There was discussion, including the public, concerning the Commissions. The following conclusions were reached:

- Treat Commissioners with civility but design process for review
- Don’t get into name calling or stereotypes
- If Norms are not followed, Council needs to hear about it.
- Discuss Commission operations at quarterly meetings.

Dr. Shanks led a discussion on leadership. He asked the public to comment on the Council’s behavior at meetings:

- Council Members need to take seriously, complaints of Commissioners’ behavior to applicants at their meetings.
• Last Wal-Mart meeting was orderly.
• If decisions are not made at meeting and held over, there could be “lobbying” outside of the meeting.
• If the Council says it is making a decision, it needs to do it; if postponing the decision, tell public earlier.
• “Surrogates” are being heard, running things.
• Appointees are not elected, be aware of these decisions.
• When comments are made at end of meeting, public cannot comment.
• This is a big day, work through solutions.
• More listening
• Vision for the long term
• Hard-working staff
• Perceptions can be turned around quickly
• There is an atmosphere that is adversarial
• Recognize there are a lot of little tiny things.

Dr. Shanks led a lengthy discussion on trusting each other.

**Mayor Brennler called a recess for lunch at 12:15 p.m.
Workshop resumed at 12:50 p.m.**

Dr. Shanks led a discussion concerning conflict conversations and how to implement them constructively. Individual Council Members confronted others on specific conflict issues. The following consensus statements are a result of these discussions:

*There was Council consensus to allow adequate time after public comment for Council discussion before making a motion.*

*There was Council consensus to have Mike create a list of his concerns and meet with the City Manager and the City Attorney to achieve closure on the issues and publically announce the results.*

**Mayor Brennler called a recess at 2:55 p.m.
Workshop resumed at 3:05 p.m.**

Dr. Shanks asked How Does the Council Act At Its Best?

• Council listens to each other
• Courteous
• Respectful language
• Problem solving oriented
• Treat Council/Staff/Public with respect even with disagreement
Deals with interpersonal conflict when it happens
Need to explain briefly decisions and how conclusions was reached
Work longer to seek consensus / broader support
Work harder for more agreement/every issue considered
Considers issue then moves on
No decisions late at night
Work out differences quickly
Support Council decision even if you are in the minority
Respect the process
Follow an agreed upon process concerning motions
Argue the issue and don’t get personal (Hard on issue, soft on people)
Focus on the things we agree on
Mayor and Council Members can send letters supporting business development
Focus on policy issues and let Staff implement them

The Council concluded that For the Future.....

Respect people even when they have a different opinion than ours.
Council sends a clear message by consensus to implement a plan.
Council has a definitive decision making process.
Support Staff, and do not make them part of the election scenario.
We will have multiple people that want to run for City Council.
We can all rate the City with a +20% dividend, trust is a visible asset.
The Council has the same goals for the community.
Council defends individual members when attacked.
Correct falsehoods.

There was Council consensus that individual Council Members may be an ambassador for the City to potential businesses, encouraging them to come to Atascadero.

Mayor Brennler adjourned the Workshop at 4:10 p.m.

MINUTES PREPARED BY:

Marcia McClure Torgerson, C.M.C., City Clerk