

# Falmouth Town Council

## Annual Retreat Agenda

Thursday, July 25, 2013

### Objectives

The primary objective of the retreat is to develop consensus on a work plan for the Council's upcoming year. As a result we will have a written statement of our priorities for goals and projects and perhaps even a pie chart reflecting how the Council intends to direct it's energy.

While an annual work plan is the primary focus, we will also discuss and draw some conclusions about how we communicate with each other and with the Town manager, and also about our specific roles as Council members.

Lastly, as a result of our quality time together and a few team building exercises thrown in, we expect Council members will know each other better, appreciate each other, and have a solid foundation for working together over the next year.

### About the Retreat

So that all perspectives are fully considered, that our time together is highly efficient, and that our themes and conclusions are well-documented, the retreat will be professionally facilitated by Craig Freshley of Good Group Decisions. At the start, Craig will explain some simple ground rules to set the stage for a top-notch retreat.

The retreat will be somewhat informal and Craig will treat all members of the Council equally. Craig will reflect themes and conclusions to the group as we go along. Dress is casual. Lunch and other refreshments will be provided.

### Agenda

- 8:30            **Opening**  
                  Welcome by the Council Chair  
                  Retreat Agenda and Ground Rules explained by Craig Freshley
- 8:40            **Warm Up**  
                  We will do a little warm up exercise that will help us get to know each other and get our retreat off to a fun and productive start. It won't be the same exercise as last time but does promise to be every bit as educational and exciting as last time! Fasten your seat belts.....
- 9:20            **Annual Work Plan – Information Sharing and General Discussion about Unfunded Projects**  
                  We will review a matrix prepared by the Town Manager which describes several unfunded projects including: RR Crossings;

Town Hall; Community Center; Library and Open Space. This part of the agenda is all about becoming informed so that better decisions can be made later in the day. Later in the agenda, the Council will be asked to consider whether these projects should be considered in the 2013-14 Council Work Plan. *(Please note that these items are not the only items for consideration in the Work Plan and the purpose of this agenda item is to educate the Council on matters that have been discussed informally and formally during the past couple of years.)*

10:30        **Break**

10:45        **Annual Work Plan – Initial Ideas**

What should the Council focus on over the coming year? Using an interactive visual mapping technique, we will first brainstorm ideas, then categorize them, and then prioritize our ideas. We will work with a “blank slate” rather than off last year’s work plan, but we will have last year’s work plan in front of us as a reminder.

11:45        **Lunch**

12:15        **Team Building**

We will do a fun little exercise designed to learn some new things about communicating as a team. Craig will provide a clear objective and some simple rules. Can we achieve the objective while following the rules? Let’s find out! After, we will debrief the exercise and tease out some “lessons learned.”

12:45        **Annual Work Plan – Conclusions**

Based on the morning discussion, Craig will offer some conclusions about Annual Work Plan priorities. We will discuss, refine, and finalize.

1:15         **Scheduling and Communications**

In an effort to improve our scheduling and communications efficiency, we will discuss and then come to some conclusions about the following:

1. Best ways for Council members to communicate with each other outside of Council meetings
2. Best ways for the Town Manager to convey information to Council members
3. Best ways to schedule meetings in which Council members are expected to participate
4. Other scheduling and communications issues

2:00

**Council Roles**

We will discuss and come to some conclusions about the most appropriate role for Council members:

1. In Council Meetings (ideally, how should we behave in the public view)
2. As members of Committees
3. With regard to Work Plan implementation

2:45

**Closing Comments**

This is a chance for each member of the Council to make a final comment, perhaps a reflection about the retreat or perhaps a particular hope or concern going forward.

3:00

**Adjourn**