

Xburg Comprehensive Plan Citizens Workshop

Agenda (With Annotations)

Location
Date and Timeframe

Rules of the Road:

1. Please be respectful of your fellow participants. While we understand you are passionate about your position, please allow others to have their say as well.
2. Listen.
3. Please check the “personal” at the door.

I. Welcome, Introductions, and Overview of Process (10 minutes)

Note: You can either use a time length (10 minutes) or a starting time (10:00 a.m.). I tend to use the time length, given that the actual session may or may not start precisely at the prescribed hour. While it is general practice to acknowledge public officials at the beginning of the meeting, I would suggest not doing so unless the officials are there in a “helping” position. The practice sets up an uneven dynamic between elected officials and citizens, at least the the view of participants.

II. Introduction to Clustering Workshop and Questions (10 minutes)

Note: This gives you a chance to explain the proceedings and answer any questions participants might have. Typical introductory comments will vary, depending on the nature of the workshop and the topic. That said, if you are doing a clustering workshop, you should probably go over the following:

The general instructions for the workshop:

- Each subject/topic station is numbered.
- Each group has been assigned a specific colored pen or pencil. Take the pencils or pens with you as you move from station to station.
- Start with the topic and the number of the table where you are currently sitting. You will spend 15 minutes with the topic on your table.
- We have started you off with some general topics that appeared in the citizen surveys. Write down goals or ideas you have for each of the topics. You may discover that your ideas have already been recorded by an earlier group. Feel free to add on to an idea or make alternative suggestions.
- At the end of the 15 minutes, we will ring a bell. Move to the next table numerically. So if you are at Table 8, you will move to Table 9; if you are at Table 10, you will move to Table 1.

III. Clustering Workshop: First Five Stations (1 hour and 20 minutes)

Note: Workshop staff act as “floaters,” which means you will be moving from group to group to see how they are doing. If a group looks stuck, start by asking to talk about the issue in front of

them. Are there things they would like to see done that are not on the list? Make sure you have an egg timer or some other timing device and something like a very loud cowbell to signal when groups should move to the next station.

IV. Short Break: 15 minutes

Note: My father was a Presbyterian minister. He had a general rule of thumb for dealing with controversy in his church...hold a church potluck either before or after the meeting. "People," he used to say, "generally are less prone to arguing or yelling if there is food involved." As a rule of thumb, always have food and beverages at citizen workshops. It doesn't have to be fancy: goldfish, cookies, a cheese, veggie, or fruit tray from your local grocery. Something participants can nibble on. Make sure you have at least one beverage and one snack that can be consumed by someone with diabetes. In beverages, generally a combination of bottle water, juice, and sodas will work. If you are holding your meetings in the colder months, have water, coffee, and a variety of tea bags.

V. Clustering Workshop: Last Five Stations (1 hour and 20 minutes)

Note: See comments under Section III.

VI. Meeting Wrap-up Discussion (5 minutes per subject...1 hour total)

Note: As the last of the 15 minute periods ends, ask one representative from each mobile group to tape their sheet (or sheets) on the wall. Make sure you have a two to three roles of drafting tape or something similar that will not harm the paint job. Painter's masking tape will also work in a pinch. Stay away from transparency tapes: they can be hard to remove and may leave a residue.

Invite participants to spend a few minutes reading what the other groups added to the subject clusters. About 10 minutes.

Start at one end of the line of sheets, and ask participants, overall, what should be the top three goals or the three most important issues per subject. You are trying to achieve some sort of consensus on what is the most important. Write a "1" next to the most important goal; "2" next to the next most important; and "3" next to the third most important.

VI. What's Next (10 minutes)

Note: Spend some time explaining the next step or steps in the process, especially in terms of the subject clusters they have just created. The What's Next session will vary based on your process. If you limited the participants to generating goals only, you may want to cover the next workshop. If you included both goals and strategies in the workshop, you may want to discuss how the information they generated will be used. It is important to make sure they understand, before they leave the workshop, that the information and ideas they generated have value and will be put to good use. If there are subsequent meetings scheduled, make sure you remind them of the meetings, including dates, times, and locations, and provide them with a handout that describes upcoming events.