

Open Government

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Motivation For Recommendations

- Government for “we the people”
- Open government is better government
- Promote honest, caring, practical government
- Actual integrity
- Public reporting to voters, not private reports to campaign donors
- None of this is welcome in corrupt autocracy

Staff Reports

- Leadership staff write one page weekly reports for the public
- Includes accomplishments, problems, plans
- Working reports, not press releases
- Posted online
- Leadership staff includes mayor, city councilors, chief of staff, directors, some managers
- Should be policy, not charter

Mayor's Staff Meeting

- Develop practical implementation of city policy
- Discuss key initiatives, plans, alternatives, bad ideas, good ideas, ...
- Includes mayor, leadership staff
- Public and city council invited to attend and converse
- Dialogue, not speeches
- Probably weekly
- Should be policy, not ordinance

Personal Meetings

- Provide public access to staff
- All city officials, councilors, and staff should be available to meet with the public
- Every reasonably polite email, text, and phone call from the public should be answered
- Limit public meeting & correspondence time
- Adults should be able to talk to anyone about anything
- Add this to city charter

City Councilor Time

- City councilors could be full-time, not part-time
- Better distribution of government power
- Weaken executive, strengthen legislature
- Provides more job time for meeting with public
- See if full-time commitment would prevent too many people from running for office

Requests For Information

- All government documents should be public unless there is a proven need for confidentiality
- Provide requested information free or at minimal charge
- See "Parking Ramp Questions" December 19, 2017 by myself for how not to provide information
- May be necessary to supersede state law via home rule charter to allow providing “sensitive” info
- Add this to city charter

Even These Should Be Available

- Advice from city attorney to city leaders
- Contract negotiations
- Too controversial to release ongoing litigation
- Police video should be available to anyone who has been arrested or detained by police
- Protects constitutional right to fair trial (see Brady vs Maryland 1963)

Respecting Public Opinion

- Public should vote on large city life expenses, controversial topics, and charter changes
- Petitions should be respected (see “Proposed Administrative Building” by myself September 20, 2016)
- Council should accept community zoning opposition (see "Build It Now" by myself March 13, 2018)

Balancing Power

- Sioux Falls has a strong mayor form of government; mayor officiates city council meetings
- City council normally approves mayoral proposals with a large majority
- Mayor should attend but not officiate city council meetings
- Would provide more effective power to city council
- Add one council district to maintain odd number of effective council members
- Changes require updating city charter

Making It Work

- Update city charter to codify these requirements
- Ensure open, honest, responsive local government

Enjoy Nature

