

Town Accountability

"What gets measured gets done, what gets measured and fed back gets done well, what gets rewarded gets repeated." - John E. Jones

For many of us who have spent our careers in the for-profit world, measurement, accountability, feedback, and quarterly business reviews (QBRs) are standard practice. Town governments, public commissions, and their customers (the residents) deserve the same. The Tiburon Police Department has started reporting more statistical information but for the majority of the town operations and priority making among the Town Council and the other Commissions and JPAs, there is minimal reporting, public updating or transparent coordination.

The Town staff and Council have an opportunity to make improvements to how we work, communicate and deliver a higher level of service to the town residents.

Priorities, Budget, Metrics & Reportings

Currently, the Town reviews the budget on an annual basis, evaluating this year's budget as it establishes next year's budget. The Town Staff pull together the necessary year-over-year analysis, identify capital Improvement projects (CIPs), operating expenses, and revenue, and submit a budget for the following year. The Town Council does not require a staff report or even a subcommittee to review the financial information as the year moves forward.

In addition, there are no quarterly or annual metrics to help the Town Council or the residents determine "how the town is doing" in providing services. There are no metrics on the number and fees collected for residential and commercial permits, or time to open and close permits, or the cost and number of miles of paved streets, or other operational data. Without data, the town staff, council, and residents cannot course correct or reorder priorities as circumstances change. Without data, it is hard to recognize operational improvements and praise accomplishments throughout the year.

SOLUTION: To address these gaps in data and communication, I recommend, in collaboration with my council members, quarterly business reviews (QBRs) focusing on the following:

Financial Oversight: The goal is to use these reviews to ensure the Town stays on budget, spends wisely, and tracks revenue trends, including permit revenue.

Operational Performance: During these QBRs, we will review the effectiveness of public services, such as the mean time for permit review, and inspection delays.

Project Tracking: Quarterly receive updates on capital improvement projects, such as road repairs, facility upgrades, and storm water management initiatives.

Strategic Alignment: Many towns also use QBRs to ensure that their services and projects are aligned with broader town goals, such as economic development, sustainability, or community engagement. Small towns that have QBRs include Aspen Colorado, Bar Harbor Maine, and East Hampton Connecticut.

Net Promoter Score Survey. Net Promoter Score (NPS) is a metric used to measure satisfaction by asking customers how likely they are to recommend a company to a friend or colleague. The Town should investigate

satisfaction or feedback surveys at the end of every residential and commercial project and report these to the town council quarterly to understand how we can improve Town services.

JPA Agency Accountability

The Town of Tiburon has three joint Power Authorities (JPAs) with the City of Belvedere delivering services to the residents of both municipalities: the Belvedere-Tiburon Joint Recreation JPA (The Ranch), the Tiburon Peninsula Traffic Relief JPA (Yellow Bus Challenge), and finally, the Library JPA (Belvedere-Tiburon Library Agency).

These JPAs receive varying levels of funding and oversight from the Town, but are not held to a consistent level of reporting or accountability. The Ranch receives minimal financial support from the Town of Tiburon. The Yellow Bus Challenge is funded partially by Tiburon and Belvedere and currently focuses on the subsidized bus system in the two municipalities, but its scope can include more. Finally, the Library Agency receives more than \$2 million annually from the Town of Tiburon and the Council appoints residents to the board.

SOLUTION: I would suggest the following:

The Ranch. The Ranch's operating costs are covered predominately by its program revenue, but capital and other non-program costs are supplemented by the Town. The Ranch is composed of several resident board members from both municipalities and one Town Council Member. Annually, the Ranch's Executive Director should provide operational metrics and a review of its strategic plan in coordination with the Tiburon Town Council member.

The Yellow Bus Challenge. The bus subsidy is covered in the Town Council budget for review. Twice during the school year, in coordination with traffic metrics, the JPA should also report to Tiburon Town Council on how the bus program is performing and how traffic is being impacted or reduced. Currently, the small scope of this JPA is limiting its ability to be effective. I addressed this point and recommend a broader agency scope in my [Traffic Solution Policy](#).

The Library. This JPA provides fantastic services at no or minimal direct cost to our residents. It is funded through property taxes from Tiburon and Belvedere and the Library Foundation. On an annual basis, the Library Executive Director and the Chair of the Library board should walk through key service metrics, expanded into others requested by the Town Council. The Executive Director should provide project updates relevant to their largest operational funder, the Town of Tiburon.

Commission Priorities

The Town of Tiburon has multiple [commissions and boards](#), including: Planning, Design Review, Parks Opens Space and Trails (POST), Heritage and Arts, and a number of others. When I was elected Chair of the POST Commission, my goal was to meet individually with all of the members of the Town Council to understand their priorities for the Town's resources. I discovered this process of aligning on priorities is not systematic or documented as an official step among the other Commissions. In conversations with other current and former Town commission members, they also felt a disconnect between understanding the goals of the Town Council and the Commissions they serve on.

SOLUTION: I'd like to address this by requiring that the Town Council and newly elected Chair and Vice Chairs of the standing Commissions and Boards meet annually to align on goals and priorities for the Town. It is important to understand each other's goals so all the boards and commissions can develop programs to deliver better services to the residents.