



**CIVIC
CAMP**

Get Stuff Done Workshop March 12, 2011

The Get Stuff Done Workshop took place on March 12th at the Karo Group Building in the Beltline Community.

The goal of the workshop was to help provide information and tools to help groups get stuff done. Here is a synopsis of what took place at the GSD Workshop.

How to run a Cabin or Action Group

Presenters: Natalia Zoldak, DJ Kelly
9:00am-10:30am

Natalia Zoldak began by giving a presentation on Great Public Spaces Group. She explained that there are two types of people, those who process oriented and those that are product oriented. Both are important in launching a successful project.

This group's intention is to activate Calgary's public realm and reclaim public spaces.

Define the subject, and discuss issues.

Natalia deciphered the different kind of public spaces in the Sunnyside area. She also noted a genuine need for a community bulletin and a lack of community space for events, such as halls or suitable recreation centers.

The Great Public Spaces group finds crowd sourcing a valuable tool. Through research Natalia came across concept designs for the many triangle grass patches throughout the area of Sunnyside that go unused.

Lack of community space isolates people and takes away from the identity and imagination of a community.

By reincorporating those spaces back into the lives of the people the community within the city will be enhanced and a dynamic environment with its own identity evolves. This place-making project is a powerful movement that spun directly from concern about the lives of those within the community. It relies on active involvement from people in the community as well as the GPS group.

Natalia believes how we engage people is extremely important.

DJ Kelly then gave a presentation on how to run a cabin.

He started out by saying that there is no wrong way to run a cabin. The plan is set by those who show up to the meetings. There has to always be a reason to keep moving forward.

Limited resources can be a challenge when it comes to money and man power.

This is one thing that will have to be accepted and dealt with.

Try to get done whatever you can get done with the people in the room.

Identify Goals.

When choosing goals it is wise to do so in a way appropriate to the resources available to you.

Find what most interests you and what you are passionate about. Don't have people working on things they don't care about.

What most needs doing?

This is a question that DJ asks himself on a daily basis and is central to how he works and gets stuff done.

Doing what most needs to be done is a good way moving forward to achieve goals.

When running a cabin you must be flexible. Structures can and will change.

City Hall 101

Presenters: DJ Kelly, Daorcey LeBray, and Josh White.

10:45am-Noon

They tried to answer the question of how citizens can get involved in the process of civic politics and how to move organizations in such a way that is in the best interest of Calgarians.

The organizational structure of the city can be found at the City Manager's Office online at

http://www.calgary.ca/docgallery/bu/city_manager/city_organizational_structure.pdf.

It gives the low down on what departments exist and where specific things fit. The chart is helpful in separating different areas within the organization.

It is easy to be intimidated by City Hall and the size and complexity of it.

The first conduit is building relationships within City Hall. They are vitally important and help create an easy flow of information.

When you run into a road block within City Hall refrain from seeing this as a lack of care on behalf of the city, but rather a symptom of bureaucracy.

The political side is where change happens.

Make sure before you start working on issues you research to see what is already being done within the city.

Contact your alderman and find people who side with you to champion or assist within your group.

Call 311! This resource within the city is a great one to use when you're looking to be directed to an appropriate department. They are there to answer your questions and act as a great resource.

Do research and then present information to your alderman. It is key to understand and bring forward compiled research for them to evaluate.

Generally committees review public input and then make recommendations to council.

The next up for discussion was how administration has opened up since the election of Mayor Nenshi.

Council has become more receptive and more focused on citizens opinions.

Make friends with executive assistants and be sure not to burn any bridges at City Hall.

Be reasonable and avoid hostility and belligerence. Keep it respectful when communicating with City Hall.

Work on understanding where people fit professionally at City Hall. Network and attend as many open house type events as possible.

CivicCampers are a bridge between City Hall and Administration.

It's important to keep lines of communication open with decision makers. Using online media and other influences is a good way to champion an issue and engage more people.

CivicCamp is a known group at City Hall. Community associations are highly valued within City Hall.

CivicCamp representatives can use CivicCamp to help them make connections at City Hall and with Administration. CivicCamp is a respected group and will help make them more receptive.

Building and keeping rapport with council is highly recommended for working with the city to achieve your goals.

Democratic Teamwork with Better Means

Presenter: Chirag Cabari

1:15pm-2:45

Better Means is an online tool for groups working on projects. The creators and founders of better means wanted to find a better way to work together.

Better Means tries to facilitate without too much bureaucracy and friction. This online tool is also a way to bring like minded communities together.

Openness. Efficiency. Democracy

All projects created on Better Means without a membership are visible to all Better Means users. Nothing is held back by an organization's rules.

Everyone has a voice.

In the co-creation of projects, actions can and will arise organically through self-motivation. There are no departments of fixed committees.

Shared values and purpose are what bind the groups together. It is a permeable organization that allows anyone to join.

The team structure allows people to effectively work on the work that accepts their values.

The website is designed to contain all organization related things. You can weigh the importance of each piece of work. Each member evaluates the importance of the piece of work and the person to do the work gets the average credit for the work done.

This is a great way to effectively credit those that do a lot of work that may otherwise be overseen in a more traditional environment and allows members to see what work is getting done by whom.

You can flag the work new, open, in progress, and done. A retrospective feature allows you to judge/comment on past projects.

No private workplaces or plans exist. Not being told what to do allows people's talents to shine through.

Everyone works together. Better Means is a year old and they are still developing the software. To get started with Better Means sign up at www.bettermeans.com.

Who's Who in the Zoo

Presenters: Any group members wanting to speak about their groups work.
2:45-3:45

Groups we're given an opportunity to talk about what their groups are working on.

Governance and Finance and Infrastructure Financing have merged. Their key issues are secondary suites, the city's budget and Greenfield development.

Tamara from Great Public Spaces spoke about the Peace Bridge Celebration that will take place this summer in order to put misunderstanding and controversy behind us. Their group is working on Urban Development.

Campaign Financing has a Notice of Motion going ahead to City Hall in April that will likely lead to many of their ideas about transparency when it comes to election financing being brought forward, integrated, and used in upcoming election.

Open Data will be having a presentation on Saturday March 26, at UofC starting at 9:30 at the Mac Hall Ballroom to go over types of information which will help them figuring out what type of Data should be accessible.