

Grassroots Community Organizing

Maine Grassroots Climate Action Conference
September 15, 2017

Glen Brand, Chapter Director
Sierra Club Maine



Community Organizing=Achieving Goals Through People Power

- We are committed to organizing with our neighbors to improve our community in specific ways.
- Our volunteer time is very precious.
- A thoughtful organizing plan helps us be effective and efficient with our time, energy and resources.
- “A goal without a plan is a wish.”

Campaign Planning

- I. Determining Specific Goal(s)
- II. Assessing Lay of the Land
- III. Strategy
- IV. Communication
- V. Tactics/Timeline
- VI. Resource Management

Determining Specific Goals

Real Life Goals

- Specific change we wish to see in the world
- (e.g. install solar panels on high school)
- Quantifiable; How we know we won and/or lost
- Strategy and tactics follow

Organizational Goals

- changes we wish to see in our group
- (e.g. 5 new active team members; 100 email list of supporters); \$200 raised

Assessing the Lay of the Land

- Team Strengths and Needs
- Community Allies (organizational and influential individuals)
- Opponents (ditto)

Strategy

- Strategic Vehicle: arena where we will achieve our goals (e.g. town council)
- Targets: Decision-makers who can make our goals a reality or not (e.g. 4 town councilors)
- Secondary targets: may influence primary targets (e.g. specific business owner)
- Specific audience we need to persuade

Campaign Communications

- Clear, concise message (one sentence)
- Story (2-3 sentences)
- Problem/Solution; “elevator speech” slogan
- Local Media Outreach

Tactics and Timeline

- **Tactics:** Specific actions/activities to pressure targets/decision-makers to grant our goal
- Tactics should not confused with Goals
- What order and when?
- Involve people; attract public and media attention; resources, etc...
- Fun and community building!

Resources = People and Money

- Volunteer Recruitment and Stewardship
- How many needed? Training? Support?
- Budget
- Fundraising plan if necessary
- Ask-Thank-Inform-Involve cycle

Getting Started (see handout)

- Initial meeting for core organizers
- Initial team meeting to brainstorm plan
(Goal, Targets, Strategy, Message, Tactics, Timeline, Resources; who is doing what when; next steps)
- Importance of written plan for sharing and input
- Keeping on Track by reviewing plan

Next Steps

- Schedule now your first or next CAT meeting in October to settle on goal.
- Schedule community-wide planning meeting to brainstorm campaign plan.
- Contact maine.chapter@sierraclub.org and we'll invite SC members and supporters in your town to your meetings.
- Contact maine.chapter@sierraclub.org for advice and guidance.